



Water Quality NewsFlash

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Regional SW Permit – SF Board takes initiative – In the past, the State Water Resources Control Board has considered preparing a standardized statewide permit for the Phase I MS4s. This would be similar to the Phase II permit, which applies to smaller urban areas, but would allow for local variations. Now the San Francisco Regional Board has taken the initiative and is working with the Bay Area Stormwater Management Agencies Association (BASMAA) to develop a Regional General Permit for Phase I Bay Area stormwater permittees. Key topics in discussion include TMDL implementation and regional allocations. In addition, the permit will include provisions to implement the court decision resulting from a challenge to the San Mateo and Contra Costa stormwater permits (see NewsFlash 04-21). Significant changes to an MS4 SWMP will now require a vote of the Board, and the stormwater permit, rather than the permittee-developed Monitoring Plan, must clearly specify the type and frequency of monitoring.

CTR – Changes planned – EPA issued the *California Toxics Rule* in 2000 because the state had been unable to establish water quality objectives for inland waters for 126 priority toxic pollutants. When the CTR was published, objectives (called *criteria* by EPA) were withheld (“reserved”) for mercury in fresh and saltwater aquatic habitat. (A criterion was issued, however, for mercury for protection of human health and set at 0.05 ug/l.) An unresolved issue when the CTR was issued was what concentration of mercury would be protective of endangered species, which can be placed at risk if mercury bioaccumulates in the food chain. EPA has been working on the aquatic habitat criteria and could publish them as early as this fall. According to reports, the mercury criteria will be based on the current EPA recommended fish tissue threshold (0.3 mg/kg) and will include a translator mechanism to derive a water column objective. This translator mechanism is expected to result in mercury objectives significantly more restrictive than the current human health-based objective. In related news, EPA may also issue a new recommended selenium criterion, also based on fish tissue concentrations, which will translate into a *less* restrictive water column objective. Current CTR posted at:

<http://www.epa.gov/OST/standards/ctrindex.html>

Training

- **Caltrans Construction courses** – The course materials from the Stormwater Training Program for Caltrans staff and construction contractors are posted, as well as links to other training materials: http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/construc/stormwater/swppp_training.html
- **BIA/SoCal Seminars – Construction Stormwater Compliance** - Oct 6, 7 – Newport Beach, Valencia; for information and reservations contact Linda Conti at (909) 396-9993. See: <http://www.biasc.org/>

WQ NewsFlash is a weekly update of storm water and related news for the Department. *Verify information before taking action on these bulletins.* Contact Betty Sanchez, Betty_Sanchez@dot.ca.gov (916) 653-2115, or Fred Krieger, (510) 843-7889, fkrieger@msn.com with questions or to be added or deleted from e-mail list. Posted online at: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/env/stormwater/publicat/newsflash/index.htm>